

September 5, 2008

E-19J

Mark E. Van Every
District Ranger
Kawishiwi Ranger District
Superior National Forest
1393 Highway 169
Ely, Minnesota 55731

**Re: Supplement to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the
Glacier Project, Kawishiwi Ranger District, Superior National Forest (SNF)
EIS No. 20080283**

Dear Mr. Van Every:

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) has reviewed the above-mentioned document in accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA Implementing Regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

The Supplement to the Draft EIS (Supplement) analyzes a new alternative resulting from public comments to the Draft EIS and updated data used to determine preliminary effects of the proposed project. This new alternative is designed to move the project area toward the landscape ecosystem objectives more quickly, by creating additional young forest. The objectives as listed in the Supplement remain the same – create young forest and improve stand conditions through timber harvest, removal of unwanted vegetation, planting desired species, and prescribed burning in order to implement the SNF Land and Resource Management Plan (the Forest Plan).

We assigned a rating of LO (Lack of Objections) to the Draft EIS in our March 27, 2008 comment letter. After reviewing the Supplement, we retain our rating of LO. We understand the three action alternatives analyzed in the Supplement support the management direction for the Glacier project area as analyzed in the 2004 Forest Plan. A summary of the rating system used in the evaluation of the Supplement is enclosed for your reference.

We do, however, have one recommendation pursuant to a discussion between Susan Duffy, the project leader, and Kathy Kowal, of my staff. We recommend the Supplement be revised to clarify the percent of suitable habitat projected for Northern goshawk following implementation of the Glacier project. It is unclear from the information contained in the Supplement that the 48% of suitable habitat projected for the end of Decade 1 of Forest Plan implementation is also the expected percentage following implementation of the Glacier project.

Please send us one copy of future NEPA documents pertaining to this project. If you have any questions concerning these comments, please contact Kathleen Kowal of my staff at (312) 353-5206 or via email at kowal.kathleen@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/ Kenneth A. Westlake

Kenneth A. Westlake, Supervisor
NEPA Implementation
Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance

Enclosure – Summary of Rating Definitions